

REMARKS

Interview Summary

A telephone interview was held with the Examiner on February 12, 2007. The issue discussed was the meaning of the word “integration” in the context of Applicants’ claim language and specification. Applicants argued that U.S. Patent No. 6,641,294 (Jansa) does not teach that the evaluation circuit is integrated in the circuit arrangement. The Examiner disagreed.

Overview of the Office Action

Claims 1-5, 8-13 and 16-18 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,218,790 to Jansa et al. (“Jansa”).

Claim 6 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Jansa.

Claims 14 and 15 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Jansa in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,641,294 to Lefebvre (“Lefebvre”).

Claim 7 has been objected to as depending from a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Claim Status

Claims 13 and 18 have been canceled.

Claims 1-12 and 14-17 have been amended.

Claims 1-12 and 14-17 remain pending.

Summary of subject matter disclosed in the specification

The following descriptive details are based on the specification. They are provided only

for the convenience of the Examiner as part of the discussion presented herein, and are not intended to argue limitations which are unclaimed.

The specification discloses an electronic LED circuit arrangement. The LED circuit arrangement includes a lead (3). The lead (3) enables electronic circuit elements (6) of the LED circuit arrangement that include LED components to be driven by a drive circuit (2, 20, 21, 22). The lead (3) has a plurality of coding conductors (3c, 3d), which carry a code by means of a combination of electrically interrupted and electrically continuous coding conductors (3c, 3d). The code provides an indication of specific properties of the LED circuit arrangement. The LED circuit arrangement further includes an evaluation circuit that is located in the LED circuit arrangement -- i.e. physically within the LED module (see Fig. 6). The evaluation circuit is adapted to detect the code.

Descriptive summary of Jansa

Jansa discloses in Fig. 1 a light-emitting diode (1) that is associated with a number of contact elements (3-8) which are connected to series resistors (13-16) situated external to a physical unit which incorporates the LED. The resistors are utilized to code the light-emitting diode's intensity class. In the embodiment of Fig. 2 of Jansa, an evaluation circuit 18 is provided in lieu of the resistors of Fig. 1. In each embodiment, the physical unit includes the contact elements (3-8), a connection element (2), and the light-emitting diode (1). Depending on the code, series resistors (13-16) in the Fig. 1 arrangement are combined and thus compensate for the fluctuations in light intensity that are unavoidable in light-emitting diode manufacture. The evaluation circuit in Fig. 2 plays a similar role. The light-emitting diode (1) is therefore

automatically connected to the requisite series resistor (13-16) by connecting the connection element (2) surfaces.

Claims 1-5, 8-13 and 16-18 are allowable over Jansa under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

The Office Action states that Jansa teaches all of Applicants' recited elements.

Independent claim 1 has now been amended to recite an electronic LED circuit arrangement. The LED circuit arrangement includes a lead, via which electronic circuit elements of the LED circuit arrangement that comprise LED components are drivable by a drive circuit. The LED circuit arrangement further includes an evaluation circuit located in the LED circuit arrangement. The lead has a plurality of coding conductors, which carry a code by means of a combination of electrically interrupted and electrically continuous coding conductors. The code provides an indication of specific properties of the LED circuit arrangement, and the evaluation circuit is adapted to detect the code.

Jansa fails to teach or suggest "an evaluation circuit located in the LED circuit arrangement", as is recited in Applicants' amended independent claim 1.

Referring to Applicants' Fig. 6, the evaluation circuit (73) is clearly located inside the LED circuit (1) --i.e. physically within the LED module. The evaluation circuit (73) is thus fully integrated in the LED circuit (1) and cannot be physically or mechanically separated from the LED circuit (1).

In contrast to Applicants' recited invention, Jansa teaches that the control element (18) is connected to the LED (1) via a connection element (2) (see Fig. 2 of Jansa). According to Jansa, "A separating line 9 (shown by dashed lines) runs along a connection element (2) (shown only schematically) which has six contact elements (3-8). Together with the contact elements (3-

8) arranged inside the connection element (2), which is designed as a male connector, the light-emitting diode (1) forms a physical unit which is arranged such that it can be mechanically separated from the remaining components along the separating line 9, which symbolizes a plug connection. The physical unit, which is formed, for example, from a flexible ribbon conductor with which the light-emitting diode (1) makes contact and which is provided with the male connector, additionally comprises electrical contact points (10, 11, 12), which are interrupted in the embodiment shown and thus define a code for the light intensity class of the light-emitting diode (1)” (see col. 3, line 61 to col. 4, line 9 of Jansa). Clearly, the control element (18) of Jansa exists as a separate and distinct element from the LED (1) (i.e. the "physical unit") -- as is particularly emphasized by Jansa's depiction and description of the "separating line" 9 that denotes a physical separation of the LED unit, on the one hand, and the evaluation circuit 18, on the other -- in sharp contrast to the physical integration of the evaluation circuit (73) with the LED circuit or module as recited in Applicants' amended independent claim 1.

In response to Applicants' previous arguments, the Examiner cites Fig. 2 of Jansa as teaching that the evaluation circuit is located in the LED circuit. Applicants submit that Jansa has been misinterpreted.

As described in detail above, Jansa explicitly teaches that, “Together with the contact elements (3-8) arranged inside the connection element (2), which is designed as a male connector, the light-emitting diode (1) forms a physical unit which is arranged such that it can be mechanically separated from the remaining components along the separating line 9, which symbolizes a plug connection” (see col. 3, line 64 to col. 4, line 2 of Jansa). If the control element (18) were located in the physical unit of the LED (1), as in Applicants' claimed invention, it would not be possible to mechanically separate the control element (18) from the

LED (1), as explicitly taught by Jansa. It is therefore abundantly obvious that the control element (18) of Jansa is not located in the physical unit of the LED (1), in contrast to the location of the evaluation circuit as recited in Applicants' amended independent claim 1.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that Jansa does not teach or suggest the subject matter recited in amended independent claim 1. Specifically, Jansa fails to teach or suggest "an evaluation circuit located in the LED circuit arrangement ". Accordingly, claim 1 is deemed to be patentable over Jansa under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) or, indeed, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

Dependent claims

Claims 2-5, 8-13 and 16-18, which depend directly or indirectly from amended independent claim 1, incorporate all of the limitations of independent claim 1 and are therefore deemed to be patentably distinct over Jansa for at least those reasons discussed above with respect to amended independent claim 1.

Claim 6 is allowable over Jansa under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Office Action further states that Jansa teaches all of Applicants' recited elements in claim 6.

As previously discussed, however, Jansa fails to teach or suggest the subject matter recited in Applicants' amended independent claim 1.

Claim 6, which depends indirectly from amended independent claim 1, incorporates all of the limitations of independent claim 1 and is therefore deemed to be patentably distinct over Jansa for at least those reasons discussed above with respect to amended independent claim 1.

Claims 14 and 15 are allowable over Jansa and Lefebvre under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Office Action additionally states that the combination of Jansa and Lefebvre teaches all of Applicants' recited elements.

As previously discussed, Jansa fails to teach or suggest the subject matter recited in Applicants' amended independent claim 1.

Because Jansa does not teach or suggest the subject matter recited in amended independent claim 1, and because Lefebvre does not teach or suggest the elements of claim 1 that Jansa is missing, the addition of Lefebvre does not remedy the non-obviousness of the claims.

Claims 14 and 15, which depend indirectly from amended independent claim 1, incorporate all of the limitations of independent claim 1 and are therefore deemed to be patentably distinct over Jansa and Lefebvre for at least those reasons discussed above with respect to amended independent claim 1.

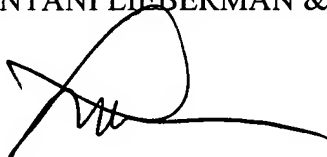
Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and withdrawal of all rejections, and allowance of all pending claims, are respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner have any comments, questions, suggestions, or objections, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned in order to facilitate an early resolution of any outstanding issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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